

Geographic Review Panel 4 – San Joaquin River

Proposal number: 2001-F201

Short Proposal Title: Microbial Indicators Of
Selenium Hazard Assessment And Biofouling

1. Applicability to CALFED ERP Goals and Implementation Plan and CVPIA priorities, and relevance to ERP and CVPIA priorities for your region. The proposal has direct relevance to Goal 6 of the ERP (Sediment and Water Quality) and indirect applications to Goal 1 (At Risk Species). Panel agrees with staff conclusion that it has the potential to contribute to multiple CALFED goals. Disagree with staff, and conclude that benefits to CVPIA priorities, i.e. anadromous fish restoration will be direct if project is successful due to improved management of salinity and selenium. Panel agrees that it would likely require a number of years to make proposal findings operational. Biofouling of the probes is a problem in our region and successful operation of the probes is important for water quality management in the San Joaquin region.

2. Linkages/coordination with previously funded projects or other restoration activities in your region. Applicant has received CALFED grants: 98B14 – Bacterial Treatment of selenium in the Panoche Drainage. Task 1 of the proposal is in part an extension of 98B14.

Task 2 of the proposed project, if successful, could contribute to improved water quality management in the San Joaquin region. CALFED previously funded real-time water quality monitoring in this area.

3. Feasibility, especially the project's ability to move forward in a timely and successful manner. Panel agrees with the TARP; work is feasible in that it could be accomplished, but there are significant questions as to the appropriateness of the approach to Tasks 1 and 2.

4. Qualifications of the applicants and others involved in implementing the proposed project. Panel agrees with the TARP that the applicants appear to have the necessary expertise to accomplish Task 1, although one reviewer was critical of the overall approach. Similarly one reviewer found the approach to biofouling of sensors (Task 2) deficient. Applicant has received CALFED grants: 99N08 – Assessment of Pesticide Effects on Fish and their Food Resources in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta; and 99N10 – Assessing Ecological Impacts of the Chinese Mitten Crab.

5. Local involvement (including environmental compliance). Proposal should have local support (as evidenced by participation in pilot of Panoche Water District), and a plan for outreach is included. There are no environmental compliance concerns.

6. Cost. The Panel agrees with the TARP that the costs are appropriate, but project management costs need to be included.

7. Cost sharing. None.

8. Additional comments.

Regional Ranking

Panel Ranking: Medium low

Provide a brief explanation of your ranking: This proposal is regionally relevant but technically flawed. The proposal contains two unrelated tasks. The TARP found significant short-comings in the Task 1 approach, including lack of a clear conceptual model of the processes, and potentially flawed technical methods. Task 2 did not present a clear path leading to a solution to the biofouling problem. These and other considerations led the TARP to question whether the project would provide any relevant information.